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THE PLAY IMPULSE AND ATTITUDE IN RELIGION

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We are accustomed to regard play as the escape of surplus energy, as a life of semblance and shamming in comparison with serious work and reverent worship, as something to be avoided when we engage in religious exercises. But current psychology is undermining these views and is giving us wonderful revelations of the function of play in religious mental economy.

In discussing this subject, I shall take up in a preliminary way the scope of play, its purpose, and the relation of this purpose to the purpose of religion, and then briefly review the salient characteristics of play, showing their relation to the religious life.

The introduction of the natural-history method in psychology has completely changed our conception of play—its nature, its function, its evolution and development, and its meaning; and, with the new significance discovered in play, comes a new interpretation of human functions, such as education, morality, art, and religion. To understand the nature of religion, therefore, we must know something of the biological rôle of play.

Play is self-expression for the pleasure of expression. This definition is very general and is subject to criticism, but it designates adequately that conception of play which I wish to present.

Play enters into the life of all normal individuals, young and old; into all the capacities, from the simplest sensory motor activities up to the highest exhibition of reason, sentiment, and will.

The senses develop largely through play with them. Watch the infant discover his ears; investigate his nose; pat-a-cake with his hands; splash in the water; grope, reach, grasp, and fumble, in all sorts of ways with touch and muscle sense. These semi-random touch plays refine the sense of touch, develop the ability to locate touch, and give meaning and pleasure to these experiences by founding and enriching associations. Basking in the sun is a temperature play. Many of our sweetmeats are eaten, not for the food value, but for the tickling of the sense of taste. We even play with the bitter and sour. To enjoy the scent and fragrance of flowers is to play upon the sense of smell.

But as we live essentially to enjoy the higher senses of sight and hearing, the delights of play center in these. All sorts of racket—ringing, rapping, cracking, and shouting—appeal to us at some stage of development. These gradually refine themselves as in the appreciation of rhythm, accent, pitch, melody, and harmony. The child plays with the cruder sounds first, because he must master them before he can appreciate the refinements of perception. At first, all sounds are alike to him. He learns their differences by play. The play in producing sounds runs parallel to the play in appreciating sounds. To be able to make sounds is a continual source of pleasure and profit. There is a close connection and a gradual transition from the youngster's racket and howl to the set and labored music lesson of the adult. Music often becomes a drudgery to the adult, because in his artificial culture the student is not allowed the freedom of play, but is forced to make sounds according to command and rule. The artist who is a genius reaches his highest mastery through play. We gain mastery of the voice, for example, far more by play than by work. The development of music and poetry is, in a marked way, the direct result of play. When genuine, they are play.

Colored nature, colored pictures, colored faces, colored dress and ornaments, are a large part of the source of enjoyment in life. Life is equally a play with form, as in the playful imitation of nature in drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc., not to mention the forerunners of all these in child play.

The scope of play in motor development is coextensive with

motor life. Children are very active. The child first makes random movements, then he co-ordinates these with movements into sitting, then creeping, then walking, then jumping, then balancing and difficult tricks, then dancing, skating, gymnastics, physical sports, etc. The capacity for using tools develops through a hierarchy of plays. Handling is notorious in children. Watch the picking, tearing, lifting, shaking, and throwing movements of the boy. See him lead the dog, the bird, the kite, and even his own playmates, thereby enjoying the pleasure of being a cause and feeling an extension of personality. Curiosity may lead to destruction or construction. The same analytic instinct of curiosity which leads the child to destroy his toy for the purpose of analyzing it, makes the botanist and the theologian. Curiosity is back of plays of imitation, invention, collection, and building. The sand-pile forms itself into mountains, houses, rivers, lakes, living folk, and beasts in the constructive curiosity-play of the child. Take, for example, the collecting instinct; the boy's pocket is paralleled only by the girl's trunk. The little urchin who stuffs his pocket with pebbles, bugs, nuts, papers, doughnuts, and pennies is moved by the collecting instinct—the same instinct which fills our museums, our art galleries, and our churches. "Follow me and I shall make you fishers of men."

The projection of personality may be traced from infancy to old age. The child begins by dropping its play things and throwing everything helter-skelter. Later he enters into competition for distance, as with the sling-shot or discus. He learns to project himself by a blow as in handball, football, baseball, tennis, golf, etc., or by imparting skilful motions as in the spinning of bodies in pool, billiards, croquet, shuffle-board, and pebbles on water, and by projection toward an object as in shooting. Then there are reciprocal movements as in catching, dodging, parrying, and decoying. There is a progressive series of extensions of personality.

Just as we play with our senses and our muscles, we play with our higher mental powers. Memory plays are favorite pastimes for young and old, primitive and civilized man. The power of reminiscence is one of the charms of life. Primitive man was a

story-teller. There is a pleasure in memorizing things that we need to remember, but we memorize a great deal merely for the pleasure of memorizing. Recognition gives a feeling of warmth and possession, as in the critical appreciation of a drama or in the interpretation of historical events. Still memory play is work in comparison with play in imagination. The effective novelist lives with his characters. It is the play illusion which makes the writing artistic. The same is equally true of the reading of fiction. The theater is a play-house; and from cradle to play-house, from story-telling to the building of a home, life is full of imagination-play. There is a pleasure in taking liberties with imagination. Novelty, shock, grotesqueness, etc., are obtained by allowing the unbridled imagination to express itself. This is the charm of reverie, mind wanderings, musings, and idlings.

Much play is hard reasoning, for example, the game of chess, solution of riddles, flash of wit, and the art of conversation, as in the clash of nothing against nothing. The feelings are perpetual objects of play. Even the cynic and grouchy Mr. Blue plays with his morbid love of bad news, tragedy, and misfortune. Indeed, we enjoy that tragedy most which is the truest picture of great misery. It is, of course, unnecessary to cite instances of play with agreeable feelings. There is much more exhibition of the will power in play than in work; as in plays which involve courage, discriminative action, self-control, etc.

In short, a very large part, and that the most essential part, of the life of both child and adult is self-expression for the pleasure of expression. That is, to the player the immediate object of the play is pleasure in expression; but when we stand off to the side and take a biological view of this process, we see here as in the exhibition of other instinctive activities that nature makes the individual serve a part of more ultimate purposes.

What, then, is the purpose of play? There seem to be two fundamental purposes traceable. The first is that which Karl Groos formulated so well fifteen years ago when he said that *play is a preparation for life*. There is a second purpose which I venture to distinguish from the first for the sake of clearness; this is that *play is one of the chief realizations of life*. We learn to live by

play; and much of the best part of life is play. Let us examine each of these in turn for a moment.

Play is a preparation for life. Children, youth, and adults all play—not with the intention of preparing for life, for such a direct aim would defeat itself, but for some immediate satisfaction. It is when we take a large view of the situation, looking back, that we see how nature has worked out marvels of development through the operation of the instinct of play, and how man is essentially a playful being.

With the conception of play, just outlined, in mind, we can see how both the mind and body have developed more through the exercise of play than through work. Sensory experience has gradually differentiated itself, acquired associations and responses, come under control of voluntary attention, and become discriminative and serviceable through play; memory, imagination, conception, judgment, and reasoning have been whetted, strengthened, and enriched through their exercise in play; affective life has become sensitive, differentiated, adapted, balanced, serviceable, and responsive through play; habits have been formed, instincts have been developed, impulses have been trained and brought under control, streams of subconscious activities have been stratified, and the power of attention has been acquired through play. In short, play has been the principal instrument of growth. We may conservatively say, without play, no normal adult cognitive life; without play, no healthful development of affective life; without play, no full development of will power.

This is not denying the place of work and tasks deliberately undertaken for immediate ends other than pleasure; it is not denying the drudgery, the dull thuds, the wearing and tearing, obligatory exercise of mind and body; but it is laying emphasis upon the fact that when we view mental development as a biological process we find that development takes place far more through play than through work. Of course we recognize that work and play are seldom clearly separated. Most of our life is a combination of the two, but the relative dominance of each may well be observed.

In the same way, both introspection and objective observation

reveal to us that the moments of supreme satisfaction, the moments of highest realization and appreciation of life come from those activities which are most conspicuously characterized by play attitudes; either from play, pure and simple, or from work in which play motives dominate. What is it that the child is all interested in, all satisfied with—most effective and at home in? It is play or playful work. Witness the lives of developed men and women who have felt the thrill of satisfaction from life. These are the persons whose minds have been full of play; whose attitudes have been a spontaneous and natural expression.

We have our work, our set tasks and duties; but those who get the most out of life are they who earn their daily bread in such work as they would be engaged in irresistibly even if they were not earning their bread and butter by it. And they are the most fortunate who get their relaxation, rest, recreation, stimulations, self-expression, etc., without making tasks of them. The things we do for the pleasure of doing are the rewards of life; they are the expression of the larger and more natural self; they are the means which take us out of the ruts of necessity and give us inspiration, power, and satisfaction.

The purpose of play, then, viewed as a biological process, is to prepare for life and to furnish a medium for the realization of life. Both the preparation and the immediate realization are most conspicuous in early years, but both continue throughout the period of normal adult life. Pity the man or woman who has lost the power to play. The pleasure of self-expression is largely immediate in the early periods, but in the more mature life it is for more and more distant ends.

The purpose of religion, we may say with Hoefding, is to supply an ultra-rational basis for conduct. This means life on a large scale—not for immediate pleasure or happiness only, not for self-control or wisdom only, not for law or duty only; but “to be in tune with the Infinite,” “to be under the influence of divine Will,” “to live in the Kingdom of God”—in short, to do those things which we enjoy because we are a part of a larger whole—because they are a part of our higher nature. This I maintain is analogous to the purpose of play and, in large part, identical with it.

Religious life is the crown of life. It is the richest and most varied of our natures; yet it involves no faculty which is peculiarly or specifically religious. It is through our senses, our memory, our reasoning, our feelings, and our actions that we are religious. Then if play is the means of growth and a large source of enjoyment, as has just been maintained, it is this for religious life just as it is for social, ethical, or business life. And this is my thesis: *Play is a preparation for religious life, and one of the chief means of its realization.* We become religious through play and to be religious is often to play.

To illustrate these propositions, let us pass in rapid review a few of the dominant traits of play and see how they singly, as well as in a group characterization, reveal the play attitude in religion.

Religion is a growth; it is a preparation for greater life. Take out the element of growth from religion and you take out religion. And how does this growth come about? It comes through exercise. The labored, set, necessary exercise produces a servile, negative, and stale religion; the religion of love, happiness, and faith, on the other hand, grows through spontaneous self-expression for the love of expression. There is nothing more mysterious about this growth than about any other mental growth. Religious sensibility, religious discernment, religious ideas, religious emotions, religious habits, the religious self-surrender, all grow through the progressive exercise of these various capacities, in religion as well as out of religion. The sentiment of gratitude to God, for example, grows better and to a higher stature, through the spontaneous reaction to the vision of divine goodness by which the soul is set aglow, than through a set expression of gratitude as a matter of duty. So repentance is not so much an obligatory affair as the free and irresistible expression resulting from a progressive change in apperception. Our ceremonies, services, and observances, whatever purpose they serve, have much in common with games, play attitudes, sacrifices, and fictions which characterize play. We have been brought up to think that it is in the lower forms of religion that we find the play elements. True they are there, but religion has invariably been linked with ceremonials. Dancing,

for example, is not an uncommon element. Indians have their savage orgie dances in their religious feasts. The Book of Psalms, which is one of the most sturdy and virile expressions of religious consciousness, teems with exhortations to sing, shout, make a loud noise, play, and dance to the glory of the Lord. And we shall find that instead of play being a mark of inferior religious attitude, it may be regarded as a criterion of development as seen in the progressively evolving higher forms of religion. So far as we know, the highest type of religion is that type which grows through play. We learn to be "joyful in the Lord" by giving expression to this joy of freedom and power. From the singing of the gospel hymns to the rendition of the sacred oratorios, there is celebration. Many have an unformulated feeling that singing is for the purpose of pleasing God; but, of course, psychologically, the essential value lies in the ennobling influence upon the singer himself. Singing about love, he becomes more loving; singing about Christ, he becomes more Christlike. And singing is a play. Dwelling upon the divine with spontaneous emotion is the surest way to cultivate the character of the divine.

Man has an instinct to do everything he can do. Work and the necessities of life develop only a relatively small part of our instinctive resources. Masses of instinctive capacities would be lost were it not for play, which is the liberal educator. Play develops those racial capacities which have not been called forth by necessity. It is creative. It develops the possible man rather than the man of choice, or necessity. Woods Hutchinson says that we are all of about the same age, at least 12,000,000 years old. We have been millions of years in the making. Instinct is the conservator of the product of these millions of years, and play is the agent of this conservator. Religious life is instinctive. We are religious because we are religious organisms. We are born with the craving for self-realization along all lines; and this craving satisfies itself through the channels of play.

The sense of freedom is an essential and distinguishing trait in all play. Witness skating, coasting, sailing, golf, and the chase; plays of constructive imagination, and idealizing. And this we find prominent in religious life, the self-expression of the freed

soul. We play when we have opportunity for rest. Religion has always been associated with rest, which, by the way, usually means change of occupation; the Sabbath was given man as a religious institution. We play when we are free. Play has always been a breaking away from the bonds and cares of this world. "Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not neither do they spin." We play when we are in need of recreation. Religion has been not only a haven of rest, but a fountain for the renewal of life's energies. The freedom which comes from a sense of independence in movement and capacity for action in our ordinary play is very limited in comparison with that freedom which comes from taking hold of some aspect of Infinite Spirit.

The most effective play is characterized by the experience of fascination. The dance, for example, when it is real play and not mere social labor, carries because the dancer falls into a state of diffuse and dreamy consciousness, intoxicated by the idea of pleasure, lulled by the automatic rhythmic movements, and soothed by the monotonous flow of the music. This element of fascination or elation with mental intoxication may be seen in some degree in all play, be it the romping of the infant, the adolescent mating plays, the sport of youth, or the successful pastime of the adult. And this element of fascination and elation is one of the characteristics of religious life. We speak of religious life as serene. Religious devotion, religious faith, religious fervor, from that of the ignorant believer to that of the dominating seer and prophet, reveal this trait. The history of conversion, revivals, and great religious movements need not be reviewed to substantiate this claim. Religious heroism, as well as religious fanaticism, picture it. The transcendent joy of the sane and cultured devout man reveals it in its noblest form. Religion in all ages and forms has had devices for cultivating this fascination and elation.

The feeling of extension of personality is a common cause and trait of play. This is clear in games of competition. The boy who flies his kite the highest is the towering boy of the bunch. The person who parries in wit and caps the climax is the master for the moment. Like freedom and fascination, this feeling of extension of personality finds its fullest expression in the religious attitude.

That communion with the Infinite which comes over one who worships in nature is a reaching out into the larger spiritual self. That new person which comes through regeneration measures its relation to the world in entirely new terms. Paul's enumeration of the wonders that faith can do is true. Faith is power. In a very real sense we are what we believe ourselves to be.

A sense of fellowship is one of the traits as well as one of the results of play. Laying aside petty differences, interests, and points of vantage, the playing group fuses into a common consciousness on the plane of equality with common means, common interests, and common enjoyment. Play is the making of social man. It is the bond of solidarity in the social group. We become like those with whom we play. Many of our religious conceptions are based on this idea of a fellowship attitude; such as the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of mankind, the sacrifice of love, abounding grace, and the joy and comfort in spiritual inheritance. Christian fellowship is the supreme test of religion. Social life in the church is a fellowship. Church dinners are not given for the sole purpose of raising money. The institutional church operates its various branches not only for the economic results, but primarily for the development of the religious life. The kindergarten in our Sunday schools is the most serviceable form of religious instruction we have for that age of children. Boys' military societies, students' receptions, and pastors' calls, have their function in building up fellowship. The psychology of childhood and adolescence is putting new life into religion among the young by seeking out and fostering natural religious impulses. I am, however, inclined to think that in many ways the high ideal of fellowship is being dragged down into the mere idea of being a good fellow and that the church needs to re-examine its social conception of fellowship. To force entertainment upon the youth does not develop the play attitude for which I am making a plea. Some of us have worshiped in the churches in which our Puritan forefathers forbade the use of the organ on the ground that it was an instrument of frivolity, and today these churches have pipe-organs, orchestras, and paid singers. Are we right, and were our forefathers wrong? Is not the fullest worship that which leads to a hearty self-expression?

Would we not often profit by substituting a good congregational hymn for some of the operatic music in our churches? It is a good thing for the child to see good games going on around him, but it would be a mistake to hire acrobats to do all the playing for him. It is not the entertainment, but the genuine self-expression that develops fellowship. It is not amusement and having things done for you, but the feeling of responsibility and opportunity for doing your share with a free hand and a warm heart that develops fellowship.

Play is positive as opposed to the negative aspects of life. It stands for acquisition, satisfaction, seriousness, and optimism. Compare the child who is full of play with the child who is deprived of the privilege of play, or who has a preverted nature. Compare the adult who has a young heart which finds self-expression in playing, and the youth who has lost his plasticity. We may divide religion into negative and positive, or into the religion of self-denial and the religion of self-expression and joy. Many of the destitute heathen to whom we send missionaries are very much more serious and self-sacrificing in their worship than we are. We send them our missionaries because their religion is negative while ours is positive. They labor to pacify their gods; we rejoice to live in God. The gospel is good news and leads to celebration. As we progress toward higher and higher forms of religion, the more we find of this positive element which is the sign of natural self-expression, as in play.

Play is an expression of the joy in life. Indeed, to the happy man and to the happy child, everything in life plays before his eyes. He eats for the pleasure of eating, drinks for the pleasure of drinking, works for the pleasure of working, rests for the pleasure of resting, listens and sees for the pleasure of listening and seeing, serves for the pleasure of serving, gives for the gratitude he feels, obeys for the joy he finds in obeying, and serves because he loves to serve. He is a free man, a man with inspiring conviction, a man who grows when he is grandfather; and the whole series of acts in his life are one sweet song. The life of the saints has always been a mystery to the non-religious. The joy, equanimity, and triumph which they have shown in the face of apparent suffering,

discouragement, obstacles, and grief is one of the wonders of the human spirit. It makes work play; it makes torture pleasure; and it makes faith the beginning of life. One side of religion is humiliation, confession, and petition; another is praise, thanksgiving, and adoration. Both have their places; but if I have my choice, give me the latter. One child is ever engaged in covering up mischief and begging for favors, whereas another only glows with joy in life and gratitude for past favors and gets more than he would think of asking. The same is true of adult religion; and it is true of the man who has been saved from a life of infamy just as really as it is true of the man who has always led a sweet-tempered life. Where grace aboundeth, there aboundeth joy. This is one of the beauties of the biography of the stricken and long-suffering who have found an abiding comfort in religion.

It is strange that play should have been regarded as the opposite of exertion. Play requires the most serious exertion. When we work, we walk; but when we play, we run. When we perform a duty, we do as much as is required; but when we play, we do all we can. Work seldom leads to overdoing, but play offers great temptation. If the football heroes were to work as hard at their lessons as they play on the gridiron, there would be fewer conditions in the classrooms. If every child grew up to work as hard as he plays, it would be necessary to form more unions to limit the time of work. The fact, then, that religion requires most serious exertion leads us to expect to find in it the most efficient type of activity, that which operates through a spontaneous interest. Only the instinctive, spontaneous, and natural impulse could bring about such self-exertion as we find in religion.

And with exertion comes seriousness. If we join in a game and are not serious about it, we are not playing. To play means to be in the game, whether it be a game of loafing or a game of war. This idea of a whole-souled self-expression fits in with the sacred nature of religious exercise. There is nothing greater in social man than love; but by the very fact of its greatness and worth, it is one of the commonest objects of play. The same principle applies to our reactions to divine love. Therefore the fact that there is a serious and solemn attitude does not deprive the exercise

of the character of play. All sport is serious; tragedy is one of the best forms of entertainment. The passion play at Oberammergau is one of the most serious as well as one of the most fascinating stage spectacles. If it were not printed on every program that the crucifixion scene is a trick, many in the audience would faint at the sight of that scene.

The play object is often the most real and serviceable. One morning my little boy said, "Jack Frost has made pretty figures on the windows." Jack Frost is avowedly a play conception and we grown-ups tend to treat it with an air of superiority; but I challenge any student of meteorology and the metaphysics of matter and force to tell me in final terms what puts the frost figures upon the window. As we advance in knowledge, we go farther and farther back, merely to fit the level of our intellectual grasp, but to this day we have only gone a few steps in the infinite regression of retreats. I am safe in saying to the wise, "Tell me what the frost is and I will tell you what God is." All we have is merely more or less serviceable symbols for the reality of matter as well as for the conception of God. In a recent sermon, the minister preached on the question "What is God?" and showed that God had at sundry times been identified with graven images, the forces of nature, a big physical man on a throne, etc. "All these," he said, "are low and unworthy conceptions. I will tell you what God is. God is love." The congregation felt warmed up and satisfied with the final solution. But the conception of God as a big man was anthropomorphic; the conception of God as love is also an anthropomorphism. Man and love are mere symbols upon which our minds rest in the ever on-going struggle toward the conception of the Infinite. "God is my loving father" is a sweet and serviceable conception only because the mind is willing to rest itself in the play attitude.

Now the fact that fellowship is present in both play and religion does not prove that play is present in religion, nor that religion is present in play. But when we take a dozen of the most salient features of play, as I have done, and find that these are among the most salient features of religious life, then there is some reason for saying that there is a relationship. I have aimed to present

the picture from the point of view that play represents a characteristic attitude of mind which we find in religion. But now I wish to represent the obverse view and assert also that religion is present in play. Religion enters into all our play for the very same reason that we cannot boast of keeping our religion and our politics apart. We feel more religious when we play golf, sail, climb mountains, or bask in the sun, than when held down to our fixed tasks of work. Religion is in play because play is the launching of one's self upon those forces in life which carry and elevate us. It represents an attitude of well-being and surrender to the beneficent forces of life.

What I have endeavored to show, then, is that those attitudes and experiences which we call play characterize a very large part of our religious experience, and the religion of daily life shows itself most naturally in the moments of free self-expression.

Let me address myself briefly to some of the most plausible objections to the argument. Foremost of these is undoubtedly the charge of eudemonism. If play is the better part of life and play is self-expression for the pleasure of expression, and the dominant factor in religion is play, then we are thrown back upon a primitive type of ethics. To this I reply first, religion is not all play, or play pure and simple; but from the natural-history point of view, the play attitude is a dominant trait. Second, the pleasure which leads to play is not at war with either duty ethics or perfection ethics in so far as these are conducive to religious life which is religious growth. Pleasure, like play, is here used in a very comprehensive sense. As we must rid ourselves of the popular idea that play is a farce, is making fun of things, is the cause of those evils which often gather around amusements, is childish, is frivolous, and is useless; so we must rid ourselves of an old psychology of pleasure and pain. Pleasure, as I have used it, may perhaps be described as that sort of personal satisfaction which comes from the exercise of an instinctive capacity.

Another charge which I must face is that of naturalism. There was a time when natural meant material, and mental supernatural, or was relegated to the realm of airy nothing. This fallacy still lurks in certain quarters of material science and the pulpit; but

modern biology finds two aspects of nature, the material and the mental. Psychology deals with the mental phenomena as phenomena in nature. Not only our sensations, associations, reasonings, and conscious reactions, but also our feelings, our impulses, and the whole stream of subconscious life behave according to laws, the laws of mental nature. The religious phenomena are, therefore, from this point of view, phenomena in nature. The psychologist is not concerned with their transcendental aspects, but compares the religious emotion with other types of emotions, the religious sentiment with other sentiments, the religious self with other selves, as phenomena in nature. This method leads to the discovery of continuity of function. We describe the religious impulse; trace its development through infancy, childhood, adolescence, adult life, and senile decline; we observe the evolutions and involutions which it goes through. There is an unbroken chain of religious evolutionary events from the cradle to the grave. We recognize in manhood the things that were present in the child, because we can trace the stages of its growth. Things which have under the old view seemed to us unholy, become holy when we discover their mission in life. There is danger, as LeConte says, that when we discover all about how the machinery works, we shall ascribe its origin and maintenance to ourselves. There is danger that when I say that the sweetest communion with God is play, some will say, with an air of finality, "That is what I suspected."

The working-man is probably looking for a change in the course of events, if my argument about play has impressed him. But there is still some work. In distinguishing between work and play, we must not be misled by terms. Much that goes by the name of work is done in all fortunate occupations in the play attitude; and, on the other hand, much that goes by the name of play is downright hard work. Many games, sports, and so-called amusements and diversions are not play at all. Witness many of the social "duties" which are done in painful compliance with duty. The greater part of life is neither play nor work pure and simple, but a blending of the two. What we have said should, therefore, be taken with reference to the play *attitude* or play impulse whether it occurs in the performance of a duty, the pursuit of an ideal, or

the pursuit of immediate pleasure. In many situations, such as in our happy and contented work, play merely gives a sort of color and vim to the occupation. Religious manifestations are always complex. Much of religion is done through awful necessity with groans and tears as preparatory to the higher type of self-expression. Much of religion is downright work, but the goal of our best efforts is to make religion the expression of the freed self, just as the goal of the beneficent employer should be to make his work cheerful and natural.

Again I may be charged with an impulsive and infantile type of religion. To this I reply that as life develops, that is, becomes more intellectualized, spiritualized, and refined in its sentiments, the play attitude runs into the more serious types of self-expression such as quiet worship, contemplation, teaching, ministration, etc., which are the equivalent, in the developed soul, of games in the undeveloped. The attitude is the same; the same purpose is served; the same instincts operate; there is simply an adaptation of the self-expression to the stage of development.

At first impression, the point of view which I have presented seems to lower the dignity of religion, to commit us to a questionable sanction of morality, and to imply despair about the possibility of knowledge; but such fears are ill-founded. If the rôle of play in religion is carefully worked out, it reveals one of the elements in religion in most vital terms, namely, natural self-development; it leads to a serene appreciation of the spiritual self; it lays a cornerstone in the foundation of our religious pedagogy; it helps to put a true value upon our symbols of knowledge; it throws some light upon the nature of the faith that is within us; it reveals in religion those moving impulses and distinguishing attitudes which characterize art for arts' sake and zeal for research and science.